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Iowa Department of Education Releases State Report Card

Report shows that 96.7 percent of districts, 90.7 percent of public schools met achievement targets

DES MOINES, Iowa – The Iowa Department of Education (DE) released *The State Report Card for No Child Left Behind* today. The report shows that the overall state percentage of Iowa public school students in grades 3-8 and 11 met the state's annual objectives. In addition, 90.7 percent of Iowa's public schools met state achievement targets for the 2006-2007 academic year.

Each year, the state sets targets in order to reach the federally mandated goal of 100 percent of all students in grades 3-8 and 11 achieving proficiency in both reading and mathematics by 2014. This year, the state average for students in these grades exceeded the annual achievement targets in both reading in math. Proficiency is measured using the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) for elementary and middle schoolers, the Iowa Test of Educational Development (ITED) for higher schoolers or the Iowa Alternate Assessment for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

In addition, the report shows that of the total 365 school districts in 2006-2007, 96.7 percent met or exceeded state achievement targets. Of Iowa's 1,491 public schools, 90.7 percent met or exceeded state achievement targets and had at least 95 percent participation in the testing for two consecutive years.

This year, the report card reflects an effort to track student progress over time. Previously, Iowa districts used the common "status model," which compares one group of students to a different group of students to measure progress. Much like a parent tracks a child's growth from year to year; districts now track the same group of students year to year to determine academic progress. Districts will follow individual students who are currently testing below proficiency to document his or her progress over time. If the individual student makes adequate yearly growth, the student will be added to a school's proficient-student count.

"This method maintains accountability while recognizing the efforts of Iowa's teachers to help

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students at different achievement levels make progress,” Iowa Department of Education Director Judy Jeffrey says. “Iowa teachers and school districts have long been requesting this model as a relevant method of tracking student growth.”

Iowa is one of only eight states in the nation approved to use a “growth model” by the U.S. Department of Education.

In addition to student achievement information, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act requires that states provide information on teachers in high- and low-poverty schools in their annual report card. The 2007 Iowa report card shows that 99.1 percent of all the assignments in Iowa schools are taught by Highly Qualified Teachers. This indicates a match between the assignment and the teacher’s endorsement area. In addition, the report demonstrates that there is a larger percentage of teachers with advanced degrees (31 percent) in high-poverty schools in Iowa than in low-poverty schools (28.2 percent).

The State Report Card for No Child Left Behind contributes to the state’s federal No Child Left Behind reporting requirements. The complete report is available on the Iowa Department of Education website at <http://www.iowa.gov/educate/content/view/652/619/>. In addition, Iowa Department of Education Director Judy Jeffrey will provide information about the report card in a podcast to be posted on the DE’s website at www.iowa.gov/educate on Thursday, Oct. 18.

The Iowa Department of Education works with the State of Iowa Board of Education to provide oversight, supervision and support for the state education system, which includes public elementary and secondary schools, nonpublic schools that receive state accreditation, area education agencies, community colleges and teacher preparation programs. The department is committed to high levels of learning, achievement and performance for all students, so they will become successful members of their community and the workforce.

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